

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY ARA:BR:RWZIMMERMAN:LK:BDF

APPROVED BY P:JJSISCO

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S/S - MR. MOFFAT

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 138496

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BR

SUBJECT: BRIEFING ON MIDDLE EAST FOR AMB. ARAUJO CASTRO

1. AMBASSADOR ARAUJO CASTRO WAS INVITED TO COME INTO THE DEPARTMENT FRIDAY, JUNE 6, AT 4:00 PM FOR A BRIEFING BY UNDER SECRETARY SISCO ON THE MIDDLE EAST.
2. FOLLOWING PRELIMINARY REMARKS, UNDER SECRETARY RECALLED THAT SECRETARY HAD TOLD SILVEIRA AT RECENT LUNCHEON THAT IN VIEW US-BRAZILIAN RELATIONSHIP, WE WOULD LIKE TO CONSULT WITH BRAZIL ON WORLD PROBLEMS AS WELL AS HEMISPHERE PROBLEMS AND WE WOULD LIKE TO START OFF ON MIDDLE EAST. AMBASSADOR CASTRO REPLIED AFFIRMATIVELY SAYING THIS WOULD BE USEFUL FOR BRAZIL WHICH COULD POSSIBLY EVEN COLLABORATE IN SOME SMALL WAY. (VENEZUELA WAS ONLY OTHER LA COUNTRY CALLED IN FOR SIMILAR BRIEFING.)
3. UNDER SECRETARY SISCO OPENED SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION WITH STATEMENT THAT MOST IMPORTANT RESULT OF FORD-SADAT
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MEETING IN SALZBURG WAS THE EXCELLENT RAPPORT ESTABLISHED. SADAT WENT AWAY ASSURED OF US INTEREST IN AVOIDING STALE-MATE AND PRES. FORD WAS IMPRESSED WITH SADAT'S FORCEFUL REITERATION THAT UAR IS LOOKING FOR A WAY TO MOVE TOWARD

PEACE. WE ARE FACED WITH TWO OPTIONS: EITHER TO FIND WAY TO RENEW SUSPENDED NEGOTIATIONS, OR IF THAT IS NOT POSSIBLE, WE MUST CONSIDER GOING TO A GENEVA CONFERENCE AND EXPLORING POSSIBILITIES THERE. REGARDLESS OF PRESS REPORTS, SISCO EMPHASIZED, NO FINAL DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN EITHER WAY AS RABIN IS COMING TO WASHINGTON IN A FEW DAYS AND WE WISH TO SEE WHAT HE HAS TO SAY. OUR DISTINCT FEELING, SISCO SAID, IS THAT EACH SIDE FOR ITS OWN REASONS WANTS TO MAKE A NEW EFFORT, WHICHEVER OPTION IS SELECTED, AND WE ARE PREPARED FOR EITHER. WHILE A GENEVA CONFERENCE IS PROBABLY INEVITABLE, ONE THING IS TO CONVENE IT AFTER A STALEMATE AND QUITE ANOTHER IF IT FOLLOWS A SECOND INTERIM AGREEMENT BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL. IN RESPONSE TO CASTRO QUERY WHETHER WE SAW TWO OPTIONS AS MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE, SISCO SAID THAT THEY WERE NOT. AN INTERIM AGREEMENT UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF A GENEVA CONFERENCE WAS ANOTHER POSSIBILITY.

4. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE REOPENING OF THE CANAL, THE PARTIAL PULLBACK OF MILITARY FORCES BY ISRAEL, THE SYRIAN SIX-MONTH EXTENSION OF THE UN FORCES MANDATE, AND THE INCREASED INTERNAL POPULARITY OF RABIN WERE ENCOURAGING SIGNS, BUT SISCO WARNED THAT GREAT CAUTION MUST BE EXERCISED AS IT IS DIFFICULT TO SAY THERE HAS BEEN ANY REAL CHANGE IN THE SUBSTANTIVE POSITIONS OF BOTH SIDES SINCE NEGOTIATIONS WERE SUSPENDED IN MARCH. THE VITAL INTERESTS OF THE WEST ARE INVOLVED AND PRESIDENT FORD WILL MOVE DISPASSIONATELY TOWARD PEACE AND DECIDE WHAT COURSE OF ACTION WILL BEST PROTECT OUR NATIONAL INTERESTS.

5. ANSWERING A QUESTION FROM CASTRO, SISCO SAID THE RUSSIANS CERTAINLY WANT TO PLAY A ROLE, BUT THEY ARE BEING CAREFUL NOT TO PRESS PREMATURELY. FOR EXAMPLE, IF THE ISSUE OF PLO PARTICIPATION AT GENEVA EXPLODES BEFORE THE CONFERENCE EVEN BEGINS, A DIPLOMATIC VOID COULD BE CREATED.

6. IT WAS AGREED THAT PROSPECTS FOR A SOLUTION OF THE GOLAN HEIGHTS ISSUE WERE NOT AS BRIGHT. THE ISSUE IS
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ESPECIALLY COMPLICATED BECAUSE OF THE SETTLEMENTS IN THE AREA AND THE LIMITED SPACE FOR MANEUVER. SISCO SAID HE MORE AND MORE SEES THE ARABS AS VERY STRONG NATIONALISTS AND THE SYRIANS ARE INDIVIDUALISTS BESIDES. SISCO ADDED THAT HE IS CONVINCED THE ARABS ARE VERY ANTI-COMMUNIST AND ANTI-SOVIET. THE ARAB LEADERS HAVE NO LOVE FOR MOSCOW WHICH HAS TREATED THEM IN HEAVY-HANDED FASHION. THE SOVIETS ARE NOT IN A POSITION TO BE UNDULY OBSTRUCTIVE IN THE MIDDLE EAST IN LIGHT OF A WHOLE SERIES OF NEGOTIATIONS IN THE OFFING: FORD-BREZHNEV MEETING, CSCE, SALT, ETC. ESSENTIALLY THE SOVIETS HAVE NEVER STRAYED FAR FROM THE BASIC ARAB POSITION. THEY ARE NOT HAPPY WITH THE US ROLE BUT IT CANNOT BE SAID THAT THEY HAVE ACTIVELY

OBSTRUCTED PROGRESS.

7. CONVERSATION THEN TURNED TO PORTUGAL. CASTRO REFERRED TO HIS RECENT TALK WITH DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY LAINGEN (REQUESTED BY CASTRO) REMARKING THAT HE GATHERED THAT THE MEETING BETWEEN PRES. FORD AND THE PORTUGUESE PRIME MINISTER WAS INCONCLUSIVE AND THAT OUR PREOCCUPATIONS PERSIST. SISCO NOTED THAT WE ARE CONCERNED NOT ONLY WITH THE IMPACT ON NATO BUT ALSO ON SPAIN AND ITALY. WE ARE MOVING CAUTIOUSLY ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS.

8. CASTRO STATED THAT ALTHOUGH THE REVOLUTION WAS INSPIRED BY THE AFRICAN WAR AND ITS EFFECTS, THE RESULTING MOVEMENT BECAME IRRELEVANT TO ITS AFRICAN GENESIS. IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO DESCRIBE THE PRESENT SITUATION IN PORTUGAL BUT THERE IS A GREAT PROBLEM WITH SEMANTICS. FOR EXAMPLE, WHAT IS A SOCIALIST IN THAT CONTEXT? MOREOVER, THE US PRESS AT LEAST TENDS TO BELIEVE TOO MUCH IN BIG POWER REACTIONS--THE FEELING OF OUTSIDE CONTROL. IN ADDITION, IT IS DIFFICULT IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES TO JUDGE TO WHAT DEGREE THE MILITARY LEADERS MUST CLING TO THE LEFT FOR THEIR OWN POLITICAL SURVIVAL AND FEAR TO LOSE MOMENTUM. IT IS ALSO DIFFICULT TO KNOW WHAT DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY PRESENT LEADERS HAVE IN TERMS OF ECONOMIC ORTHODOXY AND POLITICAL ORTHODOXY, TWO VERY DIFFERENT THINGS. BRAZIL, CASTRO CONTINUED, IS MAINTAINING CORRECT RELATIONS. EVENTUALLY INTERNAL EVENTS WILL GATHER THEIR OWN MOMENTUM AND WILL BE LESS SUSCEPTIBLE TO OUTSIDE CONTROL. THE
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BETRAYAL OF NATO SECRETS IS THE LEAST DANGER; THE REAL PROBLEM IS POLITICAL.

9. IN CLOSING, CASTRO REMARKED THAT THIS HAD BEEN AN UNFORTUNATE WEEK. EMPHASIZING THAT HE WAS SPEAKING PERSONALLY AND WITHOUT INSTRUCTIONS, HE SAID THAT STATEMENTS BY PASTORE AND THE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN ON THE PENDING BRAZILIAN-FRG NUCLEAR AGREEMENT HAD BEEN HANDLED VERY UNFAIRLY. HE REMARKED PARTICULARLY ON THE LANGUAGE USED BY PASTORE. SISCO REPLIED THAT AS CASTRO WELL KNEW, THE MATTER OF SAFEGUARDS IS A VERY IMPORTANT ISSUE IN THIS COUNTRY, BUT CERTAINLY WE HAD NO DESIRE TO SEE THE MATTER SURFACE PUBLICALLY IN THIS WAY. THE LATTER EXCHANGE WAS BRIEF AND LOW KEY.

10. FINALLY, BOTH AGREED TO CONSULT MORE FREQUENTLY IN THE FUTURE ON WORLD AS WELL AS REGIONAL MATTERS. KISSINGER

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